

CUSTOMER INFORMATION BULLETIN

DAY CARE CENTER

Planning Division

1055 South Grady Way – Renton, WA 98057
Phone: 425-430-7200 | www.rentonwa.gov

What is a *Day Care Center* and how do I establish one?

A Day Care Center is an operation licensed by the State of Washington for 13 or more children in any 24-hour period. A Day Care Center includes nursery schools, private kindergartens or pre-kindergartens (when not associated with a public or parochial school), before or after school care programs for school children, and adult day health center or social day care as defined by the Washington State.

Requirements for daycare facilities are necessarily very restrictive, in order to protect the children and adults who use them. Because of these restrictions, it is seldom feasible to convert a residence or commercial building into a daycare without extensive remodeling. Additionally, there are requirements that protect neighbors and the general public using the area around the daycare from negative impact it may create.

If you are planning a Day Care Center, it will probably be worth your while to get professional help, especially with site planning. You may need a registered engineer, architect, land surveyor or planner to help you decide how to meet the City and State requirements for traffic flow, fire department access, parking, landscaping, building use and fire protection. Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) highly recommend having the floor plans reviewed by the Office of Child Care Policy (OCCP) and the King County Department of Health prior to applying for a Child Care License. Please call a Department of Early Learning (DEL) Child Care licensor to schedule an appointment to review your plans at 425-917-7941

How to determine your permit requirements:

- 1. City Zoning Requirements:** The type of land use permit you need is determined by the zone in which the daycare is located. If you do not know the zoning classification of the property on which you plan to operate your daycare, call the City of Renton Planning Division at 425-430-7200 with the address and/or tax account number of the property. Once you know the zoning, you may determine whether the particular type of operation you have in mind is allowed, under what conditions, and which land use permits you need. The neighbors of your proposed daycare probably will be very interested in your plans. Some of them may wish to use your services. Some will be concerned about various aspects of the facility, such as landscaping, outside to play areas, hours of operation, or changes in traffic patterns. Experience has shown that it is best to let neighbors know of your plans as early as possible. Sooner or later they will find out and

early notification can help diffuse possible opposition. Neighbors may have reasonable suggestions that will make the facility more acceptable to the area. Favorable neighborhood reaction may also help smooth the permit process if you need land use permits such as a Conditional Use Permit or a Site Plan Approval. Most types of land use processes take between 8-12 weeks to complete depending on the specific permits required. City land use permit fees (e.g. Conditional Use Permit fees) can be as much as \$2,500.00 if a public hearing is required. This fee is in addition to your building permit fees.

2. Building Permit Requirements: All daycare center facilities serving more than five children, except Family Day Care Homes, need to meet commercial requirements found in the International Building Code (IBC), commercial life safety requirements, commercial accessibility requirements and more. Changes to an existing building, change of use or construction of a new building all require a building permit. Building plans and site plans will be required. Plans will need to show exit doors, room uses related uses and other information and will need to be fully dimensioned. Site plans will need to show the structure, parking and play areas. Your daycare must conform to the IBC with respect to:

- E occupancy: Daycare for children older than 2 ½ years is limited to the first story.
- I-4 occupancy: Daycare for children 2 ½ years or less requires a fire sprinkler system.
- Occupancy separation and distance to property line requirements of Chapter 7.
- Exiting requirements of Chapter 10.
- Accessibility requirements of Chapter 11.
- Structural requirements throughout the Building Code (IBC).

Your daycare must conform to the International Fire Code (IFC) with respect to:

- Fire extinguisher requirements for the International Fire Code (IFC)
- Fire alarm requirements per the IFC. A separate permit from the City Fire Prevention Bureau may be required in addition to the Building Permit. The Fire Prevention Bureau can assist you in determining if their permit is required 425-430-7042.

3. Washington State Department of Early Learning (DEL) licensing: Remember, all daycares must be licensed by Washington State <http://www.del.wa.gov/requirements/new/>, which has additional requirements. One of these requirements is to attend an orientation which will provide an overall view of DEL requirements. The DEL determines the maximum number of children a provider may care for at any one time. In general, the more children cared for, the more stringent the license requirements become (covering such as areas as health and safety, fire protection, discipline policies and facilities that must be provided). More information is available online at <http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/licensing/docs/ProviderHandbook.pdf>. After

applying for a license a representative from the State Fire Marshal's Office or local fire officials, the Department of Health, and the DEL will contact you to arrange a time to inspect the facility. For further information on obtaining a license, email the DEL at communications@del.wa.gov or call toll free: 1-866-482-4325. (Also see the State Regulations <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=170-295&full=true388-155>).

4. **Tax Registration:** In addition to obtaining a state license, it is required that you register with the State Department of Revenue for tax purposes. For further information call 1-800-647-7706.
5. **Timing:** Depending on the type of permits needed, you should allow time to complete the land use and building permit requirements. If a Condition Use Permit is needed, the process can take about twelve (12) weeks in addition to the time needed to process your building permit. A pre-application meeting will help to identify the process that will apply to your proposal operation and location.
6. **City of Renton Business License:** All Family Day Care homes are required to obtain a City of Renton Business License. You may contact the Finance Department at 425-430-6851 for the license application form or pick up an application from the Finance Department on the first floor of Renton City Hall.